

D# 12 HOUSEHOLD PETS & MEDIUM AND LARGE LOT ANIMALS

General Description

The City of Renton Code Enforcement Section made this docket item request. It proposes two changes to RMC 4-4-010 Standards for Animal Keeping Accessory to Residential/Commercial Uses. The first proposed change is to reduce the 10,000 square foot increment of additional lot size required to keep an additional household pet. The reduction is proposed to match the increment required to keep an additional medium lot domestic animal (7,500 square feet). The second proposed change is to discontinue the requirement of obtaining an Additional Animals Permit (AAP) strictly because the combined number of household pets, medium lot domestic animals, and/or large lot domestic animals is greater than four. The change would allow the adopted lot size standards to dictate the capacity of residents to keep household pets, medium lot domestic animals, and/or large lot domestic animals in numbers greater than four. The AAP would continue to be required for residents who wish to keep animals on lots that do not meet the size thresholds found in the code. For example, a person wanting to keep four chickens on a 6,000 square foot lot would still require an AAP (three are allowed on lots 6,000 sq ft and less).

Impact Analysis

Effect on rate of growth, development, and conversion of land as envisioned in the Plan

Not applicable. There are no anticipated effects on the rate of growth, development, and the conversion of land created by the proposed changes.

Effect on the City's capacity to provide adequate public facilities

Not applicable. There are no anticipated effects on the City's capacity to provide adequate public facilities created by the proposed changes.

Effect on the rate of population and employment growth

Not applicable. There are no anticipated effects on the rate of population and employment growth created by the proposed changes.

Whether Plan objectives are being met as specified or remain valid and desirable

The proposed changes do not have direct bearing on Comprehensive Plan objectives. However, the Land Use Element goals call for the promotion of neighborhoods in the City that provide a sense of home (Goal 7, part i). The elimination of additional requirements of residents who have adequate land to keep animals facilitates this goal by not being unduly restrictive with the manner in which residents foster their sense of home.

Effect on general land values or housing costs

Not applicable. There are no anticipated effects on general land values or housing costs created by the proposed changes.

Whether capital improvements or expenditures are being made or completed as expected

Not applicable.

Consistency with GMA, the Plan, and Countywide Planning Policies

The proposed changes are have no bearing on growth management. They are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and Countywide Planning Policies.

Effect on critical areas and natural resource lands

The proposed change to eliminate the requirement of an AAP would not have an effect on critical areas and/or natural resource lands. Potential run-off of animal waste or other possible contaminants into such areas that are in proximity to properties that may keep animals in numbers greater than four would not be increased by these proposed changes. It is appropriate to allow those lot sizes that meet the size thresholds to keep additional animals because the requirement of additional land increases the capacity to absorb and filtrate run-off. For example, the minimum lot size required for medium lot domestic animal (ducks, geese, sheep, miniature goats, and other similar animals) is 12,500 square feet (greater than ¼ acre). One additional medium lot domestic animal may be kept per additional 7,500 square feet in lot size. It is a reasonable assumption that a lot that measures 35,000 square feet has the capacity to carry five ducks or five miniature goats without negatively effecting critical areas. These proposed changes do not include an increase in the amount of allowable impervious surfaces, which do have negative impacts of run-off. The criteria for obtaining an AAP does not include an evaluation of the effects on critical areas/natural resource lands, so not requiring an AAP for those with appropriate lot sizes does not change this condition. The AAP would continue to be required for those who wished to keep animals in numbers greater than what is allowed outright by their lot size; a situation that may result in a diminished capacity for the land to properly function without detriment to critical area/natural resources.

Effect on other considerations

Bringing the amount of additional lot size required to keep additional household pets in line with the amount of additional lot size required to keep medium lot domestic animals provides consistency and clarity to Title IV. This will make the code easier to administer and to understand.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of both parts of the docket request. The first docket request provides greater consistency and clarity in Title IV. The second docket request would eliminate an additional layer of evaluation by City staff for residents who have large lots where Title IV has already indicated that it is appropriate for residents to keep a prescribed number of animals. Elimination of this requirement would relieve residents of the requirement of paying an annual fee of \$50 and the requirement of City staff to conduct annual inspections of these large lot AAP properties.

Implementation Requirements

Amend 4-4-010.D. regarding the number of animals that are allowed to include a table as shown in Attachment A.